

**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL  
PROGRAMMES: A CASE OF TEMEKE MUNICIPAL IN PEDP  
IMPLEMENTATION**

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**CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned certifies that he has read and hereby recommends for acceptance by the Open University of Tanzania a dissertation titled “*Parental Involvement in the Management of School Programmes: A Case of PEDP in Temeke Municipality*” in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Degree of Master of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies (MED-APPS) of the Open University of Tanzania.

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Date

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.....

Signature

.....

Date

**DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my family that is my beloved husband Mr. Emanuel Mathew and our children Elizabeth, Agnes, Christian Emanuel, and Jamilah for their moral and financial support, encouragement and prayers which have been instrumental to the success of my study. Also to my parents who dedicated their limited resources for my schooling.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to investigate parental involvement in management of school activities. Objectives of the study are to identify and assess the school activities in which parents were involved, to examine methods employed to involve parents, and to identify challenges which uncouncted by involving parents. The study utilized semi-structured interviews, focused group discussion and documentary review methods. The population included all primary schools in Temeke Municipal involving 48 respondents; including parents, Head teachers and Education officials selected through purposive or stratified random as a sampling techniques. Data were analyzed qualitatively and presented descriptively. The study found that parents were involved in school through school meetings, enrollment campaign and physical contributions. Also, parents were involved in various activities such as planning, mobilization of financial resources, building classrooms, buying teaching and learning materials, furniture and fund raising. However, the findings shows that, parents do not get involved in monitoring and follow up the learning process due to lack of cooperation with teachers, lack understanding and unclear identification of activities of parents involved. It is therefore, the study found that, parent involvement were not effective. Basing on findings, the study recommended for the central government to transfer authorities and power to parents, to make clear identification of activities in which parents are needed to be involved, and school create cooperative environment for parent's participation. Therefore, parents should understand their responsibilities, power of decision-making and committed in school activities for the effectiveness involvement.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>CERTIFICATION.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>COPYRIGHT .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>DECLARATION.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>DEDICATION.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>LIST OF APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS .....</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1.0 INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background to the Study .....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem .....	4
1.3 Objectives of the Study .....	5
1.4 Research Tasks .....	5
1.5 Research Questions .....	5
1.7 Significance of the Study.....	8
1.8 Limitations of the Study .....	9
1.9 Operational Definition of Key Terms.....	9
1.10 Organization of the Study.....	10
<b>CHAPTER TWO .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	12



2.2	Overview of Parents Involvement in Education.....	12
2.3	Parents' Participation in School Activities .....	14
2.4	Methods for Parents' Participation in School Activities .....	18
2.5	Challenges Encountered in Parental Involvement .....	20
2.6	Conclusion and Knowledge Gap .....	24
	<b>CHAPTER THREE .....</b>	<b>25</b>
3.0	<b>RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>25</b>
3.1	Introduction .....	25
3.2	Research Design .....	25
3.3	Area of Study.....	26
3.4	Target Population .....	26
3.5	Sample and Sampling Techniques.....	27
3.6	Sources of Data.....	31
3.7	Data Collection Instruments.....	31
3.7.1	Interview .....	31
3.7.2	Focus Group Discussion (FGD) .....	33
3.8	Data Analysis Plan .....	34
3.9	Research Ethical Considerations .....	35
	<b>CHAPTER FOUR.....</b>	<b>38</b>
	<b>4.0 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>38</b>
4.1	Introduction .....	38
4.2	Identifying the School Activities in which Parents Participate in the Implementation of PEDP.....	38
4.2.1	School Activities that the Parents Participated in the Implementation of PEDP39	

4.2.2 The Relationship Between the School Activities that Parents were Involved in and the Objectives of PEDP .....	46
4.3 The Methods Used to Involve Parents in School Activities and Projects .....	50
4.3.1 Methods used to Involve Parents in School Activities and Projects .....	50
4.3.2 Mechanism to Improve by the Methods used to Involve Parents' in Schools Activities and Projects .....	54
4.3.3 The Effectiveness of Involving Parent in School Activities and Projects .....	57
4.4 Identify Challenges Encountered by Involving Parents in PEDP Implementation .....	64
4.4.1 The Challenges Encountered on the Methods used to Involve Parents in School Activities and Projects .....	65
4.4.2 The Stakeholders' Views on the Effectiveness of the Methods used to Involve Parents in School Activities and Projects as Additional Explanations .....	75
<b>CHAPTER FIVE.....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>78</b>
5.1 Introduction .....	78
5.2 Summary of the Study .....	78
5.3 Conclusion of the Study .....	83
5.4 Recommendations .....	84
5.4.1 Recommendations for Action .....	85
5.4.2 Recommendations for Further Studies .....	85
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>98</b>

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Composition of the Sample.....	30
Table 4.1: School Activities in which Parents Participate .....	39
Table 4.2: Methods Employed on Parental Involvement in the School Activities ....	51
Table 4.3: The Responses on Challenges Found in Involving Parents in School Activities and Projects .....	65

**LIST OF APPENDICES**

Appendix I: The Interviews Schedule for Head Teachers .....	98
Appendix II: The Interviews for District Educational Officer (DEOs) .....	99
Appendix III: Interviews for the Ministry of Education Officials .....	100
Appendix IV: Focused Group Discussion for school Committee Members .....	101

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

CCM	-	Chama Cha Mapinduzi
CDG	-	Capital Development Grants
COBET	-	Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania
D-by-D	-	Decentralization by Devolution
DDCs	-	District Development Committees
DDP	-	District Development Plan
DEO	-	District Education officer
DEOs	-	District Education Officers
ETP	-	The Education and Training Policy
LGAs	-	Local Government Authorities
LGRP	-	Local Government Reform Program
MEMKWA	-	Mpango wa Elimu kwa Waliokosa
NBS	-	National Bureau of Statistics
PEDP	-	Primary Education Development Program
PTA	-	Parent-Teacher Association
REPOA	-	Research on Poverty Alleviation
SMC	-	School Management Committees
UBEC	-	Universal Basic Education Commission
UPE	-	Universal Primary Education
URT	-	United Republic of Tanzania
USD	-	United States of America Dollar
VDCs	-	Village Development Committees

- VEOs - Village Executive Officers
- WDCs - Ward Development Committees
- WEO - Ward Executive Officer

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

The purpose of the study is to examine the involvement of parents in management of school programmes during the implementation of Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) in Temeke Municipality in Dar es Salaam. It examines the switching of parental involvement from traditional practice of school relation with parents to full participation of parents and community in the running of school activities. This study takes cognizance of parental involvement in school initiatives and activities as a democratic concern in terms of individual rights and a way of making the educational system more self-governing; developing more power at the local level and allowing for a greater accountability by schools to the society.

There are various advantages of parental involvement in management of school activities and projects. Some of these advantages are discussed by Lemmer (2007) as including motivation of schools to function at a higher level, improving teaching and learning practices, creating higher student achievement and success in school. Furthermore, by efficient parental involvement, teachers can get support and appreciation, broaden their perspectives and increase their sensitivity to varied circumstances, gain knowledge and understanding of children's homes, families and out-of-school activities. It is therefore, parents have the right to play an active role in their children's education and school activities for the benefit of their children and also motivate teachers.

According to Hung (2007) society needs to increase parents involvement in order to realize higher achievements of educational standards through participation in school works, understanding of the interactions between parenting skills and student success in schooling and a commitment to consistent communication with teachers about students' progress.

Based on research findings it has been shown that, parent involvement in education has included home-based activities such as helping with home-work, encouraging children to read, and promoting school attendance and school-based activities such as attending Parent Teachers and Association (PTA) meetings, parent-teacher conferences, concerts, and other school events; contribution of finance, materials and volunteering at school during the day.

The Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 1995 and Education Act No. 25 of 1978 (as amended in 1995) stipulate a number of aspects pertaining to the management of education by involving parents and communities through school committees. It points out that ministries responsible for education and training shall devolve their responsibilities of management, development planning, financing of institutions, and preparation and monitoring of whole-school academic duties in implementation of PEDP to lower organs under school committees' jurisdiction.

Since commencement of PEDP in Tanzania in 2002, the Ministry of Education and Culture adopted the same model of implementation to the school committees representing parents in all activities pertaining to planning and management of schools' activities in a manner that involves pupils, parents, staff and other



stakeholders through the framework of decentralized system (Mmari, 2005, REPOA, 2007)). It is generally assumed that during PEDP implementation, development of schools parents and communities would become more engaged with the educational process which in turn, would improve not only accountability but also participation by students in schooling and performance by teachers, head teachers, other school officials and so forth. Within broad parameters the committee is to determine the best use of the capitation, development and capacity building grants, and to monitor and report on their use.

According to Rajani and Omond (2003) and REPOA (2007) the PEDP objectives include to increase the access to education through campaigning on enrollment of children to schools and complete standard seven, to improve the quality of education through improved human resources/staff and physical facilities such as availability of enough classrooms, teaching and learning materials in schools, the strengthening of capacity and competence of staff and school committees in decision making at all levels in order to achieve efficiency, public participation and empowerment of local communities.

The school committees have been engaged much on increasing access of children to schools by campaigning on enrolling pupils in standard one, constructing classrooms and contributing of funds for school development but lack improving the pupils' educational quality through monitoring their performance and progress academically on what are learning. This led to higher failures rates in standard seven and some dropped out of school except with differences in some families with parental

monitoring of home based activities. This is contrary to PEDP objective on enrolling pupils and all to complete and pass the studies with quality education.

According to REPOA (2007), devolution of authority to parents' participation through school committees is geared to increase accountability and efficiency by shortening the distance between parent and policymaker but lack effectiveness especially in knowledge gaps which hinder administrative efforts to become a reality. This is a result, denies the people in the local areas to exercise their powers in matters related to planning and management of school programmes.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

PEDP adopted 1995 ETP guidelines that school committees should represent the whole community in school management, planning, implementation and monitoring. However, PEDP did not guarantee the participation of school committees in school activities because ideally the parents did not consider running of the school their responsibility. Participation of parents in management and planning in running school programs was lower than expected levels of performance. Absenteeism and lowered participation of parents in school committee meetings and other activities impeded the success of PEDP objectives.

The challenges parents face vis-a-vis success were numerous but perceived differently among different stakeholders and authors. In PEDP implementation, the participation of parents has seemingly not been realized and they have continued to ignore their roles. The evidence shows that parental involvement has always strengthened the functioning of the school activities. The major concern was

whether the parental involvement was adequate and to what extent that could ensure sustainability and efficiency of school management, hence the study needs to investigate the adequacy of methods and specific activities parents were involved in as well as the challenges which parents face in the management of school programme.

### **1.0 Objectives of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the involvement of parents in management of school activities during PEDP implementation. Specific objectives were:

- (i) To identify and assess the school activities in which parents participate in implementation of PEDP.
- (ii) To examine the methods employed to involve parents in school programs during implementation of PEDP.
- (iii) To identify challenges encountered during implementation of PEDP.

### **1.1 Research Tasks**

- (i) Identifying and assessing the school activities in which parents participate in implementation of PEDP.
- (ii) Examining the methods employed to involve parents in school programs during implementation of PEDP.
- (iii) Identifying challenges encountered during implementation of PEDP.

### **1.2 Research Questions**

**Task One:** Identifying and assessing the school activities in which parents participate in implementation of PEDP.

**Questions:**

- (i) In which activities do parents take part at school level?
- (ii) How are the activities related to PEDP goals and objectives?

**Task Two:** Examining the methods employed to involve parents in school programs

**Questions:**

- (i) By which methods were the parents involved in school activities and projects?
- (ii) How effective were the methods employed to involve parents in school activities and projects?

**Task Three:** Identifying and assessing the challenges encountered in the implementation of PEDP.

**Questions:**

- (i) What were the challenges encountered in involvement of parents in school activities and projects?
- (ii) What should be done to improve the involvement of parents in implementation of schools activities and projects?

**1.6 Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework is defined as an abstract indication of basic concepts and constructs that are expected to interact on actual settings and experiences that form a foundation of a good research study (Le Compte, 1984). The conceptual framework which was used in this study was a synopsis of literature review on the involvement of parents in management of school activities. It aimed to provide clear links from

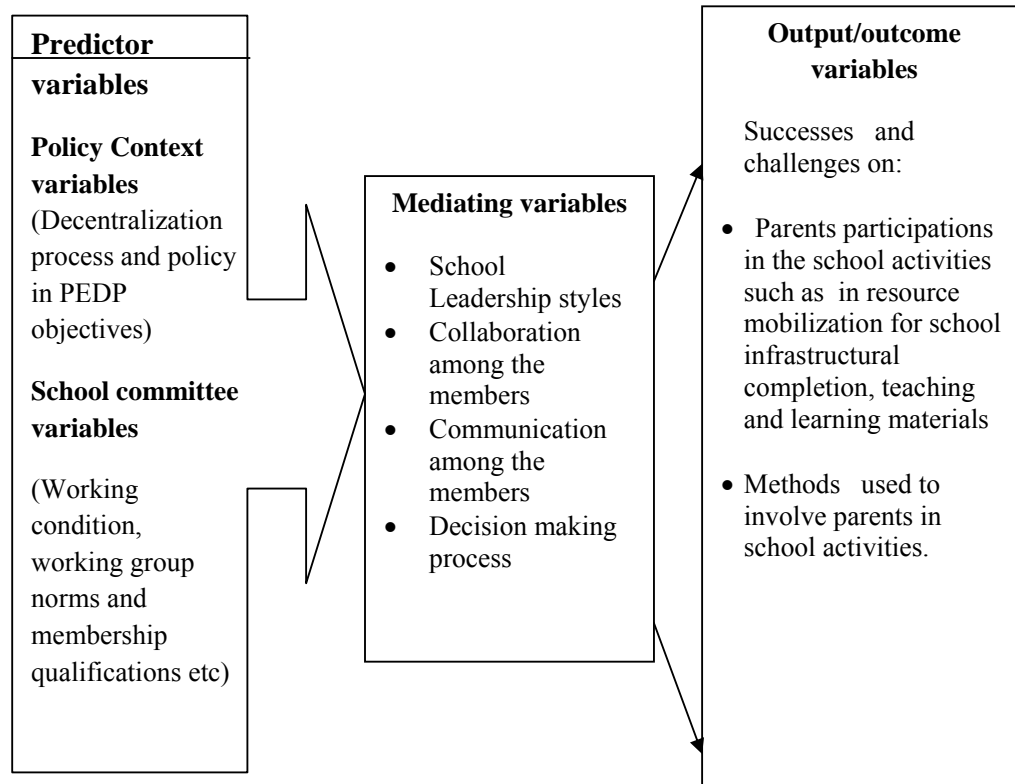
the literature to the research objectives, tasks and questions. These included identifying and assessing the school activities in which parents participated, examining the methods employed to involve parents in school programs, and identifying and assessing the challenges encountered in such involvements. As such, the framework was put in three parts namely the predictor variables which involved policy context variables and school committee variables; the mediating variables which included the variables on school leadership styles, collaboration among the members, communication among the members and decision making process; and the outcome variables which accrued from interaction of the first two. The outcome variables were the basis for formulation of research questions on which the study was hinged.

The policy context included the educational decentralization policies including the 1972 decentralization programme, the 1978 Education Act No. 25, Educational and Training Policy (ETP) of 1995 and ensuing PEDP of 2002. These variables were considered to have influences as the actors which mediated the formulation and practice of PEDP generally, and involvement of school committees in particular. This suggested that the successful implementation of the policies and programs at school level depended on whether there was collaboration among the school committee members, the school leadership styles, and parents.

The outcome variable referred to the product resulting from interaction of predictor and mediating variable which manifested in terms of extent of participation of parents, appropriateness of methods of participation, mobilization-related resources

available and challenges encountered in involving parents in school programmes.

The framework could be diagrammatically presented as in Figure 1.1.



**Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework on the Involvement of Parents in Management of School Activities**

**Source: Adapted and modified from Omari (1995)**

In order to operationalize the output variables, data were collected by interview, focus group discussions and documentary review, and later analyzed by content and discourse analysis techniques.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The study is expected to raise awareness of the policy makers and educational authorities on appropriate methods to involve parents in planning and management of school activities in Tanzania. It would be used as a tool to address different

challenges and opportunities at all levels for the promotion of parental involvement in the planning and management of school programmes in future .The research findings would expand knowledge in the area and open future research opportunities.

### **1.8 Limitations of the Study**

The study encountered the problem of lack of cooperation by some respondents to provide required data especially school committee members; some demanded payments for their time to participate in the interviews. Researcher feared lack of cooperation and unwillingness to participate which could affect the authenticity of the data collected. Some official documents such as files for PEDP facilities or projects records were not easily and readily given to the researcher for reasons related to “confidentiality”.

### **1.9 Operational Definition of Key Terms**

**Local Community:** The concept of local community may refer to a group of people living in one place or locality such as a village or town, or it may refer to a group of persons having the same or similar interests. The school is the main institution for the transmission and acquisition of the knowledge, values and skills, and thus it might be regarded as the most important asset of any community. Thus it is quite natural that we should expect close links between schools and their communities.

**A school Committee:** A group of elected members responsible for managing and overseeing the activities of a primary school, and to provide it with community

support. School committees have a pivotal role in the implementation of the Government's Primary Education Development Plan (HakiElimu, 2004).

**Parental Involvement:** It refers to the amount of participation a parent has when it comes to schooling and her child's life. Some schools foster healthy parental involvement through events and volunteer opportunities, but sometimes it is up to the parents to ensure that they are involved with their child's education. You can ensure that your child receives the benefits from parental involvements by staying up to date on what is happening in the classroom, helping your child with school opportunities and knowing correct safety procedure for the school.

It is a level of participation that a parent has in their child's education and school. Many parents are tremendously involved, often volunteering to help in their child's classroom, communicating well with their child's teachers, assisting with homework, and understanding their child's individual academic strengths and weaknesses. Unfortunately, there are also many parents who are not directly involved with their child's education. Many schools have programs aimed at increasing parental involvement such as game nights, home activities, and assorted opportunities for volunteers. Another reality of parents' involvement is that it typically decreases as the child gets older.

### **1.10 Organization of the Study**

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. Chapter one presents the problem which informs about the study and its context. Chapter two focuses on the review of



related literature and conceptual framework. The main concern in this review is to identify the knowledge gap. Chapter three presents the methods of investigation and procedures to address the problem and data presentation. Chapter four presents and discusses the research findings. Finally, chapter five provides a summary, conclusion and recommendations basing on the findings.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The chapter reviews the general conceptualization of the parents' involvement in school activities; the parental support and academic success of students; PEDP implementation in Tanzania and the challenges of implementation of PEDP in Tanzania. The second section reviews the global views on parental involvement in management of school activities from developing and developed countries. Finally, the chapter summarizes and identifies the knowledge gap for which this study attempts to address.

#### **2.2 Overview of Parents Involvement in Education**

Parental involvement in education is an important factor for improving academic achievement, student behavior and school climate for governmental schools. It also increases amount of children that are attending school, improved quality of education and its access.

Several literatures have shown that parental involvement in schools is often associated with enhanced student achievement, behavior and well-being as well as with democracy and empowerment (Epstein, 2001; Fan & Chen, 2001; Jeynes, 2005; Sheldon & Epstein, 2002).

On national, regional and local level, policies are developed in order to increase involvement of parents. That is the reason in 2000s the United Republic of Tanzania adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) from UN and the Ministry of

Education and Culture introduced the Primary Education Development Programs (PEDP) which is a second goal of millennium development goals. PEDP implementation was initiated in 2002 by shifting planning and management of school activities to parents. The main goal for PEDP in Tanzania was to increase access to education that was to increase enrollment, to improve quality of education, capacity building and institutional arrangements. To the PEDP objectives, implementation is mainly based on parents' involvement to accomplish its various activities and projects. PEDP is implemented through the framework of decentralized policy where parents are one of the crucial stakeholders in the management of school projects (UNESCO, 2004).

Also, parental involvement has been associated with academic success of students by creating a high quality instructional environment as a shared goal, parents transform from passive supporters to active members of the educational community. When children see the support, excitement about learning, and teamwork between home and school, they too become excited. They sense the value in learning, and their intrinsic motivation for learning grows (McLoughlin *et al.*, 2003). It has also been noted that when parents are involved in the education of their children, student achievement, attendance, health, and discipline show marked improvement (Boal, 2004; Sundet, 2004).

In addition, inviting parents, members of the business community, and service organizations to identify academic goals and standards and quantify measures of progress sends the message that what students learn and how well they learn it is not

an issue just for teachers and administrators but is a real priority for the community as well (Cunningham, 2004). Trotman (2001) concluded that whether it is a routine task or a task that seems to be insurmountable, collaboration among parents, teachers, and other school personnel promises positive outcomes. The aim of this study is to identify and assess school activities, examine methods employed to involve parents and challenges during PEDP implementation in Tanzania.

### **2.3 Parents' Participation in School Activities**

PEPD was established in 2002 as an effort to respond to the National Development Vision of 2025 and Education Training Policy of 1995 through International Convention such as Dakar Framework for Action in Education for All (EFA) in 2000 and the World Summit Millennium Development Goal. The PEDP has to involve the community/parents to improve the school development, pupils' enrolment rates and academic achievement (UNDP, 2007). The commencement of PEDP in 2002 by the government of Tanzania shifted authorities on planning and management of school activities to School Management Committees (SMC). The SMCs as representative of the parents participate in various activities that include the mobilizing of resources, planning and budgeting, and monitoring school academic duties, preparing and submit regular project progress report to the Local Government Authorities through Council Education Officers as part of their responsibility (Mmari, 2005).

This case study is supported by other literatures from different countries as follows.

According to van den Berg and van Noort (2011) in implementation of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in Uganda under MDGs, it was presumed that parental

involvement has to take place in different areas; parenting and learning at home, communicating, volunteering, decision making and collaborating with the community, in order to involve all parents in school. Each school in Uganda was supposed to have a school management committee, which takes responsibility for managing the school. The committee represents the local government, parents and teachers. Some activities involve the parents within the framework of –teacher association, in which both parents and teachers are represented. The parents are involved in several activities including establishing life skills training for all students, and support income-generating activities to meet the school academic needs and supporting needs of vulnerable students including orphan children. In addition, the parents are involved in raising financial resources to the schools.

Another case study is the Primary School Support Programme (PSSP) in Malawi which is funded by USAID and the Government of Malawi to improve the quality of education (Epstein, 2010). PSSP provided teachers with strengthened professional development opportunities and helped communities become more active in their support of education. The project interventions included training teachers in content knowledge and interactive teaching methods, expanding teaching and learning resources available to teachers and pupils, developing an accelerated reading program for standard 1, and mobilizing communities to support education.

The related study of Ghana in implementation of “Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education” (FCUBE) as an effort to boost education to Ghanaian children still do not have access to basic education (Donkor, 2010). The parents’ involvement in school

development programmes were through volunteers, in which volunteers were involved in fulfilling classroom teaching roles, to improve the quality of teaching, supporting Ghana Education Service staff to implement effective school management systems and increasing awareness of HIV and AIDS prevention. According to Henderson and Berla (1995), the more extensive parents were involved in Ghana, the higher the student achievement and more positive attitudes and behavior.

A similar study of Spernes (2011), in implementation of Education for all in Kenya, also shows the importance for schools and parents to share the responsibility for education. Normally, parents' responsibility is to provide economic resources: buying school uniforms, books and other necessities for schooling. The parents and community members are expected to meet educational costs for their children in respect to the school necessities. Some educational facilities are paid directly to school management for buying teaching and learning materials. According to Abdi and Cleghorn (2005) as much as it is the responsibility of a pupil or student to excel in his or her academic pursuit, it is also important for parents and the community to guide this individual to excel academically since learning does not stop in the classroom but extends to the student's home and the immediate environment.

Also, a case study in South Africa shows communities are involved in order to have interest in a good relationship with school, in terms of money or service; school as well as the community needs to benefit schools (Prew, 2009). The parents and local community are involved in activities related to management of school funds,

students' school academic affairs and the availability of children school materials such as school uniforms, books and food supplies.

In most public schools in Nigeria, parents and local communities levied themselves to raise enough funds for implementation of basic education programmes, to provide facilities in both primary and secondary schools like classroom blocks and dormitories (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004) and not on issues like communicating performance and how to boost or maintain such performance of the individual.

Furthermore, in Chile parental involvement increase competition and accountability of schools to parents' in education it is considered a model for other countries to follow (IDB 1994). As in other Latin America countries, evidence provided suggests that financial parental involvements in school development and activities has resulted in an absolute drop in the overall level of direct government spending on education and dramatic expansion of private for-profit schools. This is why the government has capitalized in the involvement of the parents and local communities in support of implementation of school projects.

Moreover, in Ethiopia, parents compensate for the inadequacies or limitations of local government in the regulation and day-to-day functioning of schools. They become involved primarily in decision making about school locations and daily schedules so that they feel more comfortable sending their children to school (Bossert and Rugh, 1998). This is considered a good option because it gets parents and other community members actively engaged such as by advocating for greater

government support or by contributing material and financial resources that may yet be an essential strategy for extending access to schooling to the world's children who are still deprived of basic education. According to Winkler and Yeo (2007), the key inputs for benefits to education are improved teacher training, provision of adequate curricula materials, increased parent involvement and good governance.

#### **2.4 Methods for Parents' Participation in School Activities**

To ensure the participation of parents in school activities, several methods were used to involve the community. These include meetings with school committees, School meetings which involved parents were used to raise awareness on enrolling the children to schools and fundraising for school's development, though implementation of these aspects have been mixed (Tumbo-Masabo and Omondi, 2009). The development of physical infrastructures such as school buildings demanded parents support in terms of labor supply. The parents were also required to support availability of building materials such as wood and bricks. However, there was little parental support in terms of personal follow up for their children's academic achievement.

The related case study by Van den Berg and van Noort (2011) argues that implementation of UPE employs several methods to ensure parental involvement in Uganda. One of the methods is for parents to assist inside the classroom by supporting teachers and children, or outside the classroom by helping administrators and organizing activities such as financing of school projects, planning and decision making through parent organizations and advisory committees. In addition, through



the parent-teacher association, the cooperation between parents and teachers is strengthened by giving these stakeholders a voice in the decision-making process. By giving parents a voice in decision making parents get empowered which has to do with the acquisition of skills that lead to the opportunity for people to play an active and participating role in their own environment and their opportunity to create change (Suzuki, 2002).

Another case study which shows the methods employed to involve parents in school activities is the Primary School Support Programme (PSSP) of Malawi which was launched in January 2006. The government of Malawi has employed several methods of involving parents in school activities. PSSP provides opportunities to communities to become more active in their support of education through mobilizing communities to support education. The project involves parents in management of small grants provided by government to school management committees to improve school infrastructure. Also the project involves parents in fund raising; supporting teaching and learning process by introducing youth clubs volunteers and all were done through school meetings and other similar methods (Epstein, 2010).

Also, through the implementation of Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) in Ghana, parents were being involved through various methods. One of the methods to parents' involvement in school development programmes was through volunteering (Donkor, 2010). Volunteers are also supporting civil society agencies to advocate on educational issues as well as encouraging community involvement in school development as a means to address barriers to girls' education

(NEA, 2008). In addition, the parents in Ghana participated in school activities through public meetings in which decisions and resolutions were being passed.

## **2.5 Challenges Encountered in Parental Involvement**

According to URT (2006) there are several challenges in the implementation of PEDP including funds secured for implementation of the plan. In some localities the communities were reluctant to contribute through physical participation on the basis that funds disbursed by the Government were enough. This called for vigorous campaign to enlighten them through the use of different means of media.

Swai & Ndidde (2006) reported that in the implementation of PEDP there was no mechanism in place for school committees to check on the performance of schools activities and (Mushi, 2006) suggested to put in place mechanisms to appraise teachers regularly and to discuss pupils' academic performance. Sumra (2003) reported that the knowledge on educational matters of school committee members and the powers of the school committee in running of schools is one of the problems faced PEDP in implementation.

Sumra (2003) and (TCDD, 2003) also found that teachers and members of school committees and ward education supervisors (WES) had limited knowledge of their entitlements and little influence on budget decisions impacting on the use of their funds respectively and have not received the necessary support to enable them to provide the leadership at the school and village levels.

Generally, the parental involvement in implementation of PEDP was an ambiguous issue in that parents were involved in contributions of funds, mobilization of

resources such as desks, construction of classrooms, and monitoring of funds and physical resources. However, the school committees did not adequately create awareness among parents especially on monitoring teaching and learning process that is reflected in poor academic performance of pupils.

Also, Suzuki (2002) shows several challenges of UPE implementation in Uganda regarding parental involvement in management of school activities. Although parents are given voice in decision making through various methods and activities, but they were not empowered enough to play an active and participating role in their own environment and opportunity to create change. Additionally, Ugandan parents experience a lack of school accountability because of little transparency of school finances, and the existing power inequality between parents, teachers and head teacher.

According to Crook and Manor (1998) parents' involvement in school development programmes through volunteers and public meetings in Ghana there have challenges. At the local level, parents participate in school activities and public meetings in Ghana although limited, was typical of the population in terms of age, occupation and education. The richness of evidence available on the lack of responsiveness of the Ghanaian system demonstrates clearly the need to go beyond increasing participation for its own sake to making participation effective. It has been noted that nothing motivates a child more than when learning is valued by schools and families/community working together in partnership as a result of explicitly strategic intervention (Goldenberg, Gallimore, Reese & Garnier, 2001). However, in this case

study of Ghana, it is not clear on evaluated the extent to which the parents have been involved especially in school activities and some challenges that arose.

Although it is important for schools and parents to share the responsibility for education in Kenya (Spernes, 2011) the responsibility of school to provide students' education and parents it has been observed that parents are hardly involved in their children's school work. There is no clear cooperation between schools and parents and indicated that no shared responsibility between parents and school. In addition, parents' responsibility is limited to providing economic resources: buying school uniforms, books and other necessities. There is hardly any relationship to be found between parents' involvement and students' results. Also, Abdi and Cleghorn (2005) observed the wrong notion of parents that the responsibility of running schools solemnly lays in the hands of the education authorities. They recommended on the need for support from parents and community members.

According to Prew (2009), implementation of school projects in South Africa also shows some disagreements with communities over management of funds. Similarly, Suzuki (2009) observes that there is lack of financial transparency which impedes the involvement of communities in schools. It has also been noted that there is a limited access of parents to information about school and the intimidating school system, these being reasons for limited involvement (Saito, 2006; Smith & Liebenberg, 2003). On the other hand indifferent attitudes of school staff towards struggling communities can be a reason for limited parental involvement, because parents might not feel welcomed and respected by schools (Smith & Liebenberg, 2003).

In implementing school programs, Nigeria is facing several challenges in terms of institutional responsiveness that lack ‘congruence between community preferences and public policies (Fried and Rabinovitz, 1980). Although, the policy calls for devolved power and authorities to local government authorities including the councils in implementing the school activities, it does not specify clearly the activities and methods used to involve the local communities in school activities. The policy has failed on implementation stage due to lack of attention and understanding of the social context, political structure, and existing administrative systems in which it is meant to operate. The failure was due to transfer of much administrative responsibility with too little preparation for managerial and financial supports to the community and parents (UNESCO, 2004).

In Ethiopia, parents and other community members are actively engaged such as by advocating for greater government support or by contributing material and financial resources to schools (Bossert and Rugh, 1998). However, the challenge lies not only on the fact that the funding is not and will not be adequate for schools development but also on the activities and methods used to involve the parents in supporting schools (Winkler and Yeo, 2007).

According to Kristiansen and Pratikno (2006), the parents, local community and local governments in China have role to play in financing and managing basic education financial responsibility. However, the role of local communities and parents in supporting basic education is not obvious. The policy does not clearly state the important role of the local communities and parents in support of school development projects. In addition, the implementation of the policy articulation need

to be evaluate whether it was adequately put into practice to bring the desired impact (Zhang, 1999).

## **2.6 Conclusion and Knowledge Gap**

In sum, literature has pointed out that parental involvements in schools' activities and children development has potential role to play in the provision of education and its effects on school performance and efficiency. However, it has not disclosed any effects of involving parents on planning and sustainable management of school projects. Similarly, the implementation of PEDP programme in Tanzania with assumption that parents through school committees would have more autonomy to decision making and management of school activities and projects have not clear been evaluated to identify its effectiveness. This study therefore intends to investigate the involvement of parents in management of school programmes during PEDP implementation in Tanzania.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Research methodology is a way to systematically address the research problem. It indicates the practical ways in which various steps were adopted and whole research project organized in studying the research problem (Oliver, 2004; Kothari, 1992). This chapter, therefore, provides the methodology that was used in undertaking this study. It includes area of the study, research design, target population and sampling procedure, data collection instrument data analysis techniques, and the ethical considerations.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

Yin (1994) and Mulengeki (2011) look at research design as the logical sequence which connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions, and ultimately to its conclusions. They call it an action plan for moving from initial set of questions to some sets of conclusions about these questions. A Case study is one of popular research designs that are widely used throughout the social sciences for both quantitative and qualitative data collection (Burnham *et al.*, 2004). A case study in this sense refers to a short narration or description that analyses and compare contexts and situations with others. According to Merriam (2002) a case study case study designs attempt to portray, analyze and interpret the uniqueness of real situations through accessible accounts. Therefore, a case study is an in-depth investigation of individual or group to determine the variables and relationship among the variables influencing the current study behavior.

This design was selected because it was suitable for collecting information in an in-depth manner to get a picture of parents' involvement in decision-making and management of school activities and projects during PEDP implementation and identify what could be the influencing subjects and the impact of the parent involvement. In this research the foci of the study was on the schools as units of analysis, with the primary focus on the teachers, school committee members and district educational officers.

### **3.3 Area of Study**

The study was conducted in Temeke Municipal which comprises of ninety six public schools. This is one of the three municipals of Dar es Salaam region; the other two are Kinondoni and Ilala. Social-economic and political data of the three municipals indicated that people had no significant differences in terms of education status and economic incomes National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2002) so any of the three municipals could be chosen for conducting the study without affecting the results. Temeke was therefore chosen because it was able to depict features of involvement of parents in school activities elsewhere in Dar es Salaam while cutting down costs because of its proximity to the researcher.

### **3.4 Target Population**

A target population is a group which interested to the researcher; a group to whom the researcher would like to infer the results of the study (Best and Khan, 2006). The target population for this study included all primary schools in Temeke municipality where the school committee members, head teachers and municipal education officers.



### **3.5 Sample and Sampling Techniques**

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), sampling referred to procedures used to select people, places or things to study in the selected area. It involves a process of selecting a subgroup from a larger population with elements necessary for the study. The major reason for sampling in the social sciences is to reduce expenses of time, effort and money. It enables the researcher to concentrate on a specific area that may represent other areas. Sampling in this study was done by purposive and random-stratified techniques. Purposive sampling technique was used to obtain head teachers, school committee members, DEOs and Ministry of Education Officials. The purposive sampling was used due to the fact that these sample members were holding specific positions giving them chance to have rich-information on governance and management in schools with respect to the role of parents in the decision making and management of school activities and projects. On the other hand, the stratified random sampling procedure was employed in the selection of sample schools. The technique was used due to the fact that, it could ensure representativeness of the sampled schools based on their geographical locations. Researcher needed schools from both 'urban' and 'rural' geographical areas on assumption that different geographical locations could have differing influence on the parents' involvement in the school activities and projects.

The stratified sampling is used to deliberately select and involve population from different strata with the purpose of maximizing the representativeness of the sample members. The stratified criterion for this study was based on the rural and urban location of the schools criteria (Cohen, *et al.*, 2000). In addition, stratified random

sampling was also used to select school committee members based on the criteria of whether they were parents or teachers representatives.

Stratified random sampling technique was used to select five primary schools in Temeke municipality, two schools located from rural and the other three from urban areas. The selection process of this category was done by obtaining a list of schools from district education officer who were provided an equal chance of being included in the study (Bryman, 2004). The names of 96 schools were obtained from DEOs and were written in pieces of paper. Then the researcher randomly picked 5 pieces of paper which informed five names of schools which were anonymously named A.B, C, D and E.

A total of 40 school committee members (eight from each of five sampled schools) were stratified randomly selected based on their representativeness criteria. In the school committee, both the parents and teachers are equally represented therefore it was important to have sample members from both sub-sections. Members of school committee are responsible to oversee the smooth running of the school with respect to planning and management of school programs. The school committee members were involved in this study because they are involved in the planning and management of school activities. The school committee members from different geographical localities were expected to represent different characteristics and views on how parents are involved.

Punch (2002) argues that purposive sampling enables the researcher to sample on the basis of his/her judgment. Purposive sampling is considered as the most important

kind of non-probabilistic sampling to identify the primary participants. Generally, the sample selection is based on the purpose of the research (Oso and Onen, 2005). In this study the purposive sampling technique was used in order to get primary respondents according to their roles and ability to enable the researcher to obtain relevant data. Informants that were purposively identified were head teachers, school committee members, the District Education Officer and ministry of education officials. Purposive sample entails one which deliberately selects cases on the basis of specific qualities, which they illustrate (Cohen, *et al.*, 2000).

Out of 96 schools (therefore 96 head teachers), the researcher selected five head teachers purposefully based on the virtual of the schools that were previously selected randomly to make sample schools for the study. The head teachers were involved in the sample study because they had managerial and leadership responsibility for their schools including making sure that parents were involved in the planning and management of school activities and projects as it is stipulated in the decentralization policy. The head teachers are the secretaries to the school committees in their respective schools. They were considered to have experience and could provide information on the way parents are involved, for example, they are responsible for checking out and ensuring parents' attendance and involvement.

The purposive sampling technique was also used to select one Ministry of Educational officer, who was selected by the virtue of their positions and who works under the policy making and management unit in the ministry of education. The subjects selected from this unit are considered to be well informed about education

policies making and implementation including parental involvements in education management and their impacts.

The sample size involved 48 respondents from five Primary schools, Temeke Municipal and one official from Ministry of Education planning and policy department as indicated in Table 3.1. This size of sample was determined by researcher from the sampling frame that was availed to researcher at the Temeke Municipal education office. The sampling frame involved a list of public primary schools (96 schools), a list of school committee members from the head teachers offices (including both parents and teachers representatives). The respondents for this study were selected according to the principles of both simple random and purposeful sampling, with the aim of selecting informants who were likely to be information-rich with respect to the purposes and objectives of the study. Therefore, sample for this study involved 48 total respondents as summarized in the Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Composition of the Sample**

Category	Projected sample size	Available sample size
One official from Ministry of Education-planning department	1	1 (100.0%)
Municipal Education Officers	2	1 (50.0%)
Primary School Head teachers	5	5 (100.0%)
School Committee Members	40	35 (90.6%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>42 (87.5%)</b>

**Source: Field data, (2012)**

### **3.6 Sources of Data**

Data collection refers to gathering of information to establish some facts. According to Nkpa (1997) data collection is the process of obtaining proof in a systematic manner so as to determine answers to the research problem. Predominately, the study used primary sources of data to the problem under study which was interview, focus group discussion and observation. Such data have a direct physical relationship with the events being reconstructed (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). In this study, primary data involved first hand information obtained using the following research techniques: an interview that was employed to DEOs, the Head teachers and Ministry of education officials while focus group discussion was administered to members of school committees. These sources of data were important in this research as they provided relevant information on the activities and methods used to involve parents in planning and management of school programs. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001), no single instrument is considered sufficient in collecting valid and reliable data. Prior to the actual exercise of collecting data, a pilot study with five respondents were conducted to pre-test the research instruments and assess the feasibility of the study. According to Maxwell (1996), pilot studies are particularly important in qualitative research because they generate an understanding of the concepts and theories held by the people being involved. The actual data collection was done in April 2012.

### **3.7 Data Collection Instruments**

#### **3.7.1 Interview**

Interview refers to an exchange of views between two or more people on topics of mutual interest, as it takes advantage of the centrality of human interaction for

knowledge production and fits well on the social situation of research data (Seidman, 1991). The purpose of interviewing people is to find out what is in their mind and what they think or how they feel about something. An interview allows respondents to provide their interpretations of the world in which they live and express how they regard the situation from their own point of view. One of the advantages of an interview is that it allows the participant to describe what is meaningful or important to him or her using his or her own words rather than being restricted to pre-determined categories (Best and Khan, 1998).

A semi-structured interview was conducted together information from the District Education officers and Ministry of Education and Vocational Training Official. The semi-structured interview requires a framework of questions or issues to be explored in the course of interview but with considerable flexibility on how and when they are to be asked. The major advantage of the semi-structured interview was the ability it gave the researcher to probe and ask follow-up questions thereby gaining a deeper understanding of the interviewee's experience, feelings and perspectives concerning the topic under discussion. The use of this method, however, has limitation in that it may influence subjective information of the informants which are not necessary true. The interview guides are found in Appendices A, B and C for primary school Head teachers, District Education Officers and Ministry of Education and Vocational Training Official respectively. The interviews were used in this study in order to gather qualitative data in terms of views and opinions of the educators and the parents on how successful parents were involved in the implementation of PEDP program. Therefore, the interview guide involved mostly open-ended questions.

### **3.7.2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)**

Focus Group Discussion is a data collection technique that facilitates an interaction among people of similar backgrounds to talk about their attitudes and experiences about a phenomenon (Bryman, 2004). It was considered a useful method for collecting information through an organized discussion. Focus group discussion was deemed necessary following that, as it grew out of exchanging views and feelings about the phenomena with other people, it opened room for diverse views. Specifically, it is argued that interactions among participants enhance quality of data (Patton, 2002). Participants tend to provide checks and balances on each other, which weeds out false or extreme views. Additionally, because focus group discussions take the form of a natural conversation and discussion, they, arguably, provide a useful strategy for encouraging participation from people who may be reluctant to being interviewed on their own for fear of being intimidated by the formality and isolation of one to one interviews (Patton, 2002). Therefore school committee members was focused group for this study.

For the purposes of the research in this study, the researcher selected eight members from each School Committees and ran a single FGD session in each school. A discussion was conducted in one of the rooms at every school, which was a bit isolated but well ventilated for the purpose of comfort and confidentiality. This is because the discussion involved some sensitive and confidential issues based on school leadership abilities and involvement of parents in school planning and management of projects. Before the discussion the researcher introduced the purpose of the study to familiarize the informants. The researcher posed questions before

allowing the informants to discuss them. The researcher was keen to record the responses manually in the notebook.

### **3.8 Data Analysis Plan**

Data analysis means a scientific and statistical technique for determining the statistical significance of different data collected in qualitative or quantitative manners.

Data were analyzed qualitatively using content and discourse data analysis. That is, data collected from various sources were edited and analyzed to ensure that each question received an answer, whether positive or negative. The data were analyzed and classified into categories, and are presented descriptively within this dissertation using quotations, tables, and graphs.

Qualitative data collected through interview schedule, documentary review and focus group discussion were analyzed through content analysis. Content analysis is technique in which the researcher organizes information collected around themes and categories and continues to revise the information until a final perspective emerges. Miles and Huberman (1994) describe a theme as a recurring regularity developed within categories or cutting across categories. For the purpose of this study, the content from interview transcripts were analyzed for content related to themes and categories basing on the methods used to involve parents in the planning and management of school programs during PEDP implementation; the methods used to involve parents in the planning and management of school programs and challenges



faced. These themes and sub-categories have been well addressed in the findings presented in Chapter Four.

Some quantitative information was subjected to statistical analysis technique in which researcher calculated frequencies and percentages of such items as the activities in planning and management of school programs; problems in the methods used to involve the parents in the planning and management of school programs; the effect of parents' involvement planning and management of school programs. The data was finally categorized and presented in tabular form to deserve their description.

### **3.9 Research Ethical Considerations**

Ethical issues that surface during fieldwork may often pose unique challenges to the researcher (Qudsiya Contractor, 2008). This study paid attention to confidentiality and anonymity, whereby the investigator was responsible to keep in confidence all information obtained from the respondents. The participants' identity was to be concealed in written and verbal reports of the results, as well as in informal discussion in study samples. When a possibility existed that others may gain access to such information, this possibility, together with the plans for protecting confidentiality, was explained to the participants as part of the procedure of obtaining informed consent.

The researcher ensured the participants that information they provide will be treated confidentially and, if published, will not be identifiable as theirs. In the event that confidentiality and/or anonymity could not be guaranteed, the participant was

warned of this in advance of agreeing to participate. Particular care was exercised when confidential data was made available for discussion. With respect to anonymity of participants, real names were not used. Upon dissertation writing, the only people who had access to the raw data was the principal researcher (myself) and the faculty supervisor, if he so wants.

Also, the researcher recognized the participants' entitlement to privacy and must accord them their rights to confidentiality and anonymity, unless they or their guardians or responsible others, specifically and willingly waive that right. In such circumstances it was in the researcher's interests to have such a waiver in writing. Conversely, researcher recognized participants' rights to be identified with any publication of their original works or other inputs, if they so wish.

In essence people are entitled to know how and why their personal data is being stored, to what uses it is being put and to whom it may be made available. Researcher must have participants' permission to disclose personal information to third parties and are required to ensure that such parties are permitted to have access to the information. They are also required independently to confirm the identity of such persons and must keep a record of any disclosures. Researcher ensured that data is kept securely and that the form of any publication, including publication on the Internet, does not directly or indirectly lead to a breach of agreed confidentiality and anonymity.

Researcher took voluntary informed consent to be the condition in which participants understood and agreed to their participation without any duress, prior to the research

getting underway. Researcher took the steps necessary to ensure that all participants in the research understood the process in which they were to be engaged, including why their participation was necessary, how it was used and how and to whom it was to be reported. In addition, appropriate consent were sought from local authorities or organisations in which their members had to be involved in the study for their own informed decision to take part in the research.

Whenever possible, the investigator informed all participants of the objectives of the investigation and all aspects of the research or intervention that might reasonably be expected to influence willingness to participate. Researcher informed the subjects fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4.0 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This study intended to investigate the involvement of parents in management of school activities during PEDP implementation. This chapter presents the findings obtained through interviews, focus group discussions and documentary reviews. The research findings are presented, analyzed and discussed based on the research tasks as they are stipulated in chapter one namely:

- (i) Identifying and access the school activities in which parents participate in implementation of PEDP.
- (ii) Examining the methods employed to involve parents in school programs during implementation of PEDP.
- (iii) Identifying the challenges encountered by parents in PEDP.
- (iv) Recommendations on challenges facing to involving parents in school activities.

#### **4.2 Identifying the School Activities in which Parents Participate in the Implementation of PEDP**

The first task in the study was intended to identify and assess the school activities in which parents participate in the implementation of PEDP in Tanzania. To address this task one; the two questions were raised including; what school activities do the parents participate in the implementation of PEDP. Secondly, how are school activities that the parents participate related to PEDP goals and objectives? These

questions were raised with the Municipal Education Officers, members of School Committees and the Head teachers.

#### **4.2.1 School Activities that the Parents Participated in the Implementation of PEDP**

Through the interviews and the FGDs the respondents were asked to mention the school activities in which the parents participated in the implementation of PEDP.

The responses from the respondents were recorded and summarized in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1: School Activities in which Parents Participate**

Category of Responses	Category of Respondents		
	DEO	Head teachers	School Committees
Construction physical infrastructure of school	1(100%)	5(100%)	27(77.1%)
Planning and monitoring of school projects	1(100%)	5(100%)	21(60.0%)
Mobilization of school resources such as finances, building materials	1(100%)	5(100%)	18(51.4%)
Procurement of school materials such as textbooks, and building materials.	0	2(60%)	19(54.3%)
Pupils enrolment campaigning	0	2(40%)	16(45.7%)

**Source: Field data, (2012)**

Data summarized in Table 4.1 indicates the responses as they were provided by respondents in response to the question. The responses show that all the DEOs and head teachers 6(100%) said that the parents were involved in the construction of new infrastructure such as classrooms, teachers houses, latrines and rehabilitation of old

infrastructure in order to cope with increasing number of pupils, mobilisation of school resources such as finances, building materials, planning and monitoring of school projects through School Committees.

Three 3 Head teachers which is equal to (60%) out of 5 and 50% of School Committees supported the idea that parents were involved in school activities such as in the procurement of teaching and materials such as textbooks and pupils enrolment campaign. More than three quarters 27(77.1%) of the members of school committees also mentioned and supported the idea that parents were involved in the planning and monitoring of school projects through the school committees.

From the data in the Table above, at least all the categories of respondents agreed that parents participated in the construction of new infrastructure such as classrooms, teachers houses, latrines and rehabilitation of old infrastructure in order to cope with increasing number of pupils. The respondents said that planning was usually being done by the teachers and gave it to school committees to formally endorse as one of the members was quoted as saying;

We, the members of the school committee have been made to be the rubber stamp for what is planned and demanded by the government and the teachers.

I don't think whether we have adequate power and authority to block the government plan however irrelevant it is.

From the quotation above one can learn a line of divide among the members of the school committees on how parents participated in the mobilisation and monitoring of the school resources such as finances and building materials; and in the planning and

management of school projects through the school committees. This has an implication that in some schools some school committee members did not understand their responsibility and power on decision making in school activities implementation.

Secondly, about half 18(51.4%) of the members of school committees and all the heads of schools and DEOs 6(100%) said that the parents were involved in the mobilisation of school resources such as finances and building materials. The respondents maintained that the increasing number of school children as a result of PEDP demanded more classrooms, teachers' houses and food supplies to maintain the attendance of children especially those from distant places from school. It was learnt from the head teachers that although the central government used to provide funds for school projects, the money was not adequate. They emphasized that the support from parents was unavoidable if the schools had to successfully complete their projects. As a result, school committees were supposed to mobilise resources from other stakeholders including the parents as one of the head teachers said:

It is true that the central government is providing financial support for development projects, the funds are not sufficient to cover all the costs. In my school for example, the government provided us Tsh 9 million for the construction of two classrooms. In reality the costs were too high and the money therefore was not sufficient. We had no option except to mobilise funds and other construction materials from other stakeholders including the parents. It is very unfortunate that most parents are not willing to support school construction projects.

The statement in the quotation above suggests that school development projects cannot avoid support from other stakeholders including the parents because what the government gives out is not adequate. One can also agree that this form of partnership is good if it receives support from the partners particularly the parents. The involvement of partners is also emphasised by the education and training policy (ETP) of 1995. According to URT (1995) the government of Tanzania has committed itself to promote partnership in the provision of education.

Since under the law, each primary school in Tanzania is to be managed by a school committee, it is important to strengthen school committees, and promote ways in which people can contribute to improving education (Haki Elimu, 2004). Under PEDP, school committees are to prepare 'whole school development plans' and manage school budgets. The plans are intended to enable schools make their own decisions about the development of their school. This enables each school to make use of local expertise from amongst their communities, pupils and teachers about what is best for them. It also provides for information to be shared with everyone, and in this way promotes greater space for monitoring and accountability of resources and service provision for quality assurance.

Thirdly, the findings revealed that more than half 19(54.3%) of the members of school committees and 3(60.0%) of the head teachers said that the parents were involved in the procurement of school materials such as textbooks, and building materials. The head teachers who are the secretaries to the school committees were asked to explain how procurement procedures were conducted to involve parents.



They said that according to the government procurement act, each primary school has School Committee members (SC) that is responsible for overseeing the implementation of all programme activities at the school level. The School Committee is responsible for overall co-ordination of procurement activities at school level. They added that at the School Committees procurement includes goods and works related to primary school development and recurrent activities as one head teacher was quoted as saying:

It is my responsibility as head teacher in collaboration with the SC to construct a sub-committee responsible through the Supplies Officer, for day-to-day procurement of goods and works related to construction of classrooms, teachers' houses, pit latrines, libraries and rehabilitation of school buildings. I cannot do any purchasing without involving this sub-committee. However, the success in performance of this sub-committee depends on how cooperative and willing are the members to work together.

The comment in the quotation implies that procurement procedures at school level are in the hands of the school committees. SC is responsible, through the Supplies Officer, for procurement of goods and services related to recurrent academic needs including items such as school textbooks, library materials and office/teaching consumables.

On contrary however 16(45.7%) of the members of school committees and 2(40.0%) of head teachers said that the involvement of the parents in the procurement of school materials such as textbooks, and building materials was limited. The members of the school committees especially from the school in rural areas were of opinion

that school committees were only rubber stamp to allow plans and decisions made in favour of the government leaders and teachers. For example, in school C and D the members said the head teacher used to read out to them the materials that were needed and where to get them without necessarily telling them the proper reasons. They added that the head teachers in their schools used to choose members to make close allies especially those who were highly educated or wealthy. This implies that procurement in those schools was dominated by the decisions made by the SC members.

If this is the case then some schools are violating the Procurement Act section 65 of the Regulations for Procurement of Goods and Works that provides for the flexibility of procurement procedures where community participation is required (URT, 2002). According to this Act, School Committees have the responsibility to undertake procurement of materials and works in a manner acceptable to the Government and its external financiers. The SC will appoint a Supplies Officer and School Treasurer from the primary school teachers. The Supplies Officer and School Treasurer among their other duties will be responsible for procurement of goods and services for the school. The SC undertakes procurement of goods and services according to the agreed school A and B using any of the methods acceptable according to the amount school have.

Fourthly, the study indicated that less than half 16(45.7%) of the members of school committees and 2(40.0%) of the head teachers supported the idea that parents were involved in the pupils enrolment campaigns. The rest of the respondents neither mentioned nor supported whether or not parents were involved in the pupils

enrolment campaigns. The respondents who supported the idea said that in some with reference to schools C and D school committees were involved to support pupils' enrolment exercise especially during PEDP which demanded for mass enrolment. The head teachers said that it was important to involve parents in order to make the exercise successful as one remarked:

Since members of the school committees are elected by the community members around the school, they are of great help in this campaign. They are respected and listened to by the person; that is why the pupils' enrolment campaign is successful in my school every year. We used to invite them in public meetings and rallies for their support.

What is commented in the quotation may imply that in urban areas parents are much more aware of their responsibility to send their children to school, that is why campaign for school enrolment does not sound very important. This can also support the remarks made by one head teacher whose school is located in urban area of the municipal that support from the members of school committee was not important because her school usually accommodated more that what it deserved and capable of carrying. However, despite the mixed feelings and opinions of the respondents, it is still acceptable that involvement of parents through the school committees in many activities is valued a great deal as the URT (2002) stated.

The Government intends to expand enrolment starting with 1.5 million in the year 2002 and continuing up to 2006. Admission priority will be given to children who are seven years old. However, the school committee will decide on whether to enrol older children as the situation allows.

#### **4.2.2 The Relationship Between the School Activities that Parents were Involved in and the Objectives of PEDP**

All the three categories of the respondents were asked to identify and describe the relationship between the school activities that parents were involved in and the objectives of PEDP. The responses were gathered through the interviews and FDGs. More than half of the school committee members 18 (51.4%) and all the government officials including head teachers, DEOs and Ministry of Education Officials<sup>8</sup> (100.0%) agreed that there was relationship between the school activities that parents involved in and the objectives of PEDP.

The respondents said that PEDP was launched in July 2001 with the overall objectives of ensuring that each child of school going age has access to quality basic education. It was learnt that the program was designed to address critical challenges of the sub sector with a focus of strengthening linkages within the basic education and education sectors in general. Specifically, PEDP was mentioned to address the following objectives:

First, the respondents said that there was a very clear relationship between the school activities that involved parents and the first objective of PEDP. They mentioned that the enrolment expansion was reflected in the enrolment of eligible children both boys and girls for grade one. It was therefore, learnt that to implement this objective the parents participated in the campaigns on pupils' enrolment through public meetings and fund raising functions. Other school activities which parents participated include the construction of classrooms and sanitation facilities and enrolment of out of

school children within COBET classes. The respondents said that the relationship between the enrolment expansion and the school activities was that the increase in the number of classes supported the number of pupils enrolled in the schools. For example in schools A and B which were located in the rural areas, pupils enrolment increased from 516 and 649 in 2002 to 582 and 678 pupils in 2010 respectively.

However, despite the increase in the pupils' enrolment, there was very slow increase in number of the classrooms constructed during the PEDP implementation. Reports from the same schools A and B indicated that schools had more streams for the pupils than the classrooms could support them. In school A for example, 11 streams of the pupils were accommodated in only 9 classrooms. In the construction of school physical infrastructures during PEDP, parents participated through their contribution in terms of financing and building materials to supplement the government initiatives (Development Grant).

The second objective of PEDP targeted on quality improvement including the quality of teachers and quality of teaching and learning resources (supply of adequate textbooks, teaching and learning materials). The respondents were asked to comment on the relationship between the quality improvement initiatives and the school activities which involved the parents. They mentioned the school activities in which the parents were involved on improving quality of primary education including parents to willingly send their children to schools, supporting the schools financially and materially during PEDP implementation as one of the head teachers was quoted as saying:

I thank God that parents in my school have now seen the need to buy school reading and writing materials for their children. For example half of the children in class one in 2012 have their own books in almost all the subjects. This has reduced the problem of lack of textbooks to a reasonable number. Thus, limited books could accommodate the rest of the pupils whose parents could not buy them textbooks to an average ratio of 1:3

From the argument in the quotation above one can argue that the position that parents take in supporting their children with reading and writing materials can reduce the magnitude of the problem which is brought about by the rapid increase of pupils' enrolment in primary schools. However, in schools where parents are not willing to support their children materially and financially, the shortage of textbooks is likely to worsen the quality of primary education. The respondents however could not say how the involvement of parents in the school activities had any relationship with the quality improvement of the teachers. Instead, they said that it was the responsibility of the government to train and retrain teachers.

The third objective of PEDP was targeted to ensure capacity building of teachers through in-service and pre-service training, governance and management training for school leadership and school committee members at school level. The researcher asked the respondents whether they had attended any training or seminars. The parents said that some of them attended short term seminars on financial management and planning which were usually run by the municipal education officers. The purpose of this training was to provide parents with the management

and planning skills. When commenting on this training for capacity building one member of school committee had this to say:

In our school only the school committee chairman and two other members had attended training that lasted for only two days. The rest of the school committee members have not attended any training. Therefore, they have little or no skills in the management and planning of school matters.

Therefore, although capacity building was emphasized in the implementation of PEDP, in practice few parents had benefited from it. On this account one can therefore argue that with little financial management and planning skills the contribution of the parents was negligible in the school committee meetings.

In some view, the researcher wanted to know if parents had benefited from the capacity building programs under PEDP implementation. The head teachers reported that all school committee members benefited through training on how can manage school activities.

The fourth objective of PEDP targets was to initiate in their roles and responsibilities which assigned at the school level. The respondents were asked to comment on the relationship between the school activities which involved the parents and initiatives responsible. They mentioned the school activities in which the parents were involved with respect and they said that the role of the school committees under decentralized system was to mobilize voluntary community contributions to school projects in the forms of labour, finance or other community contribution and support. The respondents also mentioned that parents were involved in planning, budgeting for the

implementation of PDP. Additionally, school committees were responsible for providing accessible information to the community on implementation process, indicating progress achieved, problems encountered and funds used. The argument supports the United Republic of Tanzania (2006) observations that school committees have responsibility to manage funds received for the project implementation while ensuring maximum transparency and accountability by involving the parents particularly. The school committees are supposed to prepare and submit regular project progress report to the LGAs through Council Education Officer.

### **4.3 The Methods Used to Involve Parents in School Activities and Projects**

The study also intended to examine the methods used to involve parents in school activities and projects. Pertinent information was collected through interviews administered to Municipal Education Officer, primary school head teachers, and Ministry of Education and Vocational Training officials. Focus-group discussions were administered to members of school committees. The findings on this task were guided by the following questions: What are one used to involve parents in school activities and projects.

#### **4.3.1 Methods used to Involve Parents in School Activities and Projects**

The researcher wanted the respondents to describe the methods used to involve the parents in school activities and projects. The responses were collected, analyzed and presented in Table 4.3. Data in Table 4.2 indicate that respondents mentioned different methods including public meeting and physical contributions for the school



activities and projects; decision-making bodies; and public campaigns and funds raising functions.

**Table 4.2: Methods Employed on Parental Involvement in the School Activities**

Category of Responses	Category of Respondents		
	Head teachers	School Committee Members	DEO
<b>Public meetings and physical contribution</b>	3(60.0%)	20(57.1%)	1(100.0%)
<b>Through decision-making bodies</b>	5(100%)	18(51.4%)	1(100.0%)
<b>Public campaigns and funds raising functions</b>	2(40.0%)	29(82.9%)	0

**Source: Field data, (2012)**

Firstly, more than half of the school committee members 20(57.1%); less than half 2(40.0%) of the head teachers and the DEO mentioned that parents were being involved public meeting and physical contributions. The respondents said that school committees invited parents to provide financial support and physical resources such as building materials in the construction of school physical infrastructures. They said that in implementing PEDP projects, the central government granted financial support to schools for the construction and re-habilitation of physical infrastructures such as teacher houses, classrooms and sanitation facilities to mention a few. They emphasized that the financial grants from the central government was not adequate therefore the parents were invited to participate in the support in form of finance and building materials like the wood, sand and cement etc. However, it was found that effective participation of the parents depended on the economic capacity and willingness of the parents. For example, the head teachers in schools D and E which

were located in rural areas of Temeke municipality received low response from the parents.

The second method was mentioned to be the involvement of parents in decision-making by school committee members. This response was supported by all DEOs and head teachers 6(100.0%), half of the school committee members 18(51.4%). When they were asked to describe how this method was used to involve the parents and guardians, the respondents said that school committees were the only decision making bodies in which parents were formally involved. In explaining the involvement of the parents in decision making through the school communities one of the school committee members had this to comment:

I am a member of school committee for this school since in 2006 and I used to attend all decision making occasions. During the implementation of PEDP one of our responsibilities was to make decision on PEDP projects. This gives us authority to plan and manage financial responsibilities among others.

The quotation above shows that involvement of parents in school committees in the implementation of the PEDP provided the parents with the authority to plan and manage PEDP activities and projects. Some members of the school committees said that their involvement in the school committees had little impact in terms of making decision in representing their fellow parents. They added that the decisions making within the school committees was dominated by the ‘experts’ whom they meant to be teachers and the head teacher as one of them lamented:

It is true that we are invited in the school committee body but the majority of school committee members especially those representing parents have little

impact on decision making. Lack of skills and knowledge limit our ability to represent our fellow parents. In most cases, the decisions are being made by the head teacher in support of her teaching staff and few educated members.

The idea in the quotation above shows a doubt prevailing among the parents on their limited power and authority to take part in the school committee meetings for decision making. From this suggestion, one can guess a danger that parents may be blindly representing their fellow parents in school committee meetings and therefore little active participation and involvement of the parents in that matter. The observations support what Chediel (2000) argued that the National Education Act No. 25 of 1978 and its amendments of 1995 sub-section (60) provide that every school must have a governing; However, in practice, some of the school committees are weak, due to various factors, such as, poor education of some of the committee members and inadequate funds.

The third method was mentioned public campaigns and fund raising functions. This method was supported by more than three quarters 29(82.9%) of the members of school committees and a small number 2(40.0%) of head teachers, although there was no mention from the MEO. The researcher asked the respondents to identify and describe how the parents were involved in public campaigns and fund raising functions. The respondents said that, school committees used to organize public forums by inviting the parents and other stakeholders to discuss school problems and matters related to the implementation of PEDP projects. In explanation of this argument one head teacher had this to comment;

In the first place our school committee is made up of two types of members namely the teachers and the parents. The latter group is representing their fellow parents. This is an opportunity for parents to involve themselves in decision-making of school related matters.

In addition to that, parents were being involved in various public campaigns and fund raising functions. The head teachers mentioned that when they were about to make formal enrolment of grade one pupils they usually summoned public meetings to invite the parents in order to discuss the issue and ask for their support. These public meetings were targeted to educate the parents on the importance to send their children to school. The head teachers commented that a success in the enrolment during the implementation of PEDP was partly based on the success of the campaigns through public meetings.

It was also observed that through public campaigns school could motivate parents to give their contributions and support to school projects. They said that one of the major PEDP projects was the construction of classrooms and sanitation facilities which demanded parental support in form of finance and materials. Therefore, the public campaigns and fund raising functions were geared to educate and motivate parents and other stakeholders.

#### **4.3.2 Mechanism to Improve by the Methods used to Involve Parents' in Schools**

##### **Activities and Projects**

The study was also intended to suggest methods to be done in improving methods to involve parents' in schools activities and projects in the implementation of PEDP.

When the respondents were asked to comment on the mechanisms for improving the methods used to involve the parents in school activities, the respondents had differing opinions and views. Their views and suggestions ranged from changing the attitudes among the government officials; to providing more autonomy to School Committee to fire or sue unaccountable teachers and school leaders; and put up strategic criteria for appropriate qualifications of the members of the school committees; increasing the budgetary allocation for education emplacing capacity building programs for strengthening school committee members and teachers, among other things.

Some of the respondents mentioned that some government officials need to change their attitudes towards the decentralization of educational management policy, as one of the solutions. They suggested that lack of serious commitment and desire to devolve the educational management to lower levels was significantly important. For example, they questioned how the 10 USD meant for every primary school student could be turned to Tsh. 7,000/=when the central government provided development grants for primary education. The government officials including the head teachers were found to have negative attitudes towards the local authorities. The head teachers for example, used to question the authority and power of the school committee members.

Second, it was learned that some respondents wanted school committee to be provided with more autonomy to fire unaccountable school personnel. The power of school committees should be regained once again to make the committees stronger, committed and autonomous to exercise its authority to hire and fire incompetented

school personnel including teachers, head teachers, and non- teaching staff. Many members of the school committees recommended that the government should empower the school committees for more control of the school resources and school programs. The respondents said that it was unfortunate that teachers and non-teaching staff were not accountable to school committees. It is therefore was some cases where teachers or head teachers who misbehaved or misused the school resources were only transferred to other schools by the education administrators at the district headquarters as one of the members lamented;

Eight years ago (2003) the former head teacher misused the school funds that was meant for school construction program of the sanitary facilities.

We reported the case to the DEO at the district headquarters, who reacted after 4 years by transferring that head teacher to another school.

The quotation above suggests that if the school committees would have autonomy to take actions against the teachers they would have taken appropriate measures against the head teacher who misused the public funds. The respondents suggested that the school committees should be given autonomy to sue the teachers at the court of law.

Thirdly, the respondents recommended that there was a need to put up strategic criteria to the appointment or selection of the members of school committees with relevant qualifications. It was observed that the current system does not specify the exact and specific qualifications for the post of the members of the school committees. As a result, the respondents said that some members of the school committees were not actively representing the parents in decision-making. In school A for example, there were some members of the school committee who had no

academic qualifications to represent the parents an aspect which accounted for their failure to participate in planning and management of school programs. To explain this opinion the DEO recommended that:

In my opinion, the members of the school committees are supposed to have appropriate qualifications for them to qualify for the posts. For example, I would suggest that a citizen wanting to be a member should possess at least secondary education certificate with some experiences.

From the argument in the quotation above, one can conclude that lack of the qualifications among the members of the school committees was a reason for lack of planning and management effectiveness. It was noted that this was one of the reasons why some members were passive in the decision making process and management of school programs.

Fourth, the respondents recommended that the public budgetary allocation for education was to increase to allow capacity building programs for strengthening the quality of school committee members and teachers. It was learned that for the members of the school committees to do their job better, it was compulsory that their skills and knowledge in the planning and management of school programs are enhanced. The school committee members and teachers need to be trained and retrained as demand arises over time.

#### **4.3.3 The Effectiveness of Involving Parent in School Activities and Projects**

It was intended in the study to determine the effect of parents' involvement on the management of school activities and projects. The study was designed to address

three major research questions namely; what is the effect of involving parents in the improvement in the effectiveness of parents' participation in school activities. What is the effect of the parents' involvement on the construction of school physical infrastructures?

Also, the study wanted to find out the effectiveness of parents involvement .in school activities and projects. The researcher asked the DEOs, head teachers and the members of the school committees to elaborate on how parents' involvement affected the internal efficiency. The Ministry of education and vocational training officials did not mention whether decentralization enhanced the effectiveness of parent's participation for improved education service delivery. On the other hand, more than half (66.6%) of the school committee members and head teachers (75%) supported the idea that parents involvement has managed of school activities to improvement of education service delivery. Commenting on this, one parent was quoted as saying:

”..... I do not have adequate evidence to prove that parents' involvement had any positive implication on the internal efficiency in our school and on the delivery of education. Our school has never done any good in terms of academic performance in the last three years. Even after PEDP we have not witnessed our school to excel academically...

The quotation above suggests that some parents were still suspicious on whether the involvement of parents in planning and management of school affairs had a positive implication which improve parents participation. On the other hand, it can be



deduced from the quotation above that some parents could only interpret quality education in terms of pupils' academic performance. It was very unfortunate that many parents understood the educational quality from perspective of academic performance alone.

Additionally, the findings showed mixed feelings and opinions differing from one school to another. In two of the sampled schools, the wastage rates were even increasing especially after PEDP was being implemented; for example in school A,B and C the completion rates dropout from 95 %, 91% and 97% in 2005 to 89%, 86% and 90% in 2010 respectively. This suggests that the performance rates in the sampled schools dropped for different reasons including congestions in classes, lack of teaching and learning facilities such as desks. In the same schools, the findings on students' academic achievement indicated that transition rates from standard seven to secondary education dropped from 62%, 57% and 59% in 2005 to 49%, 45% and 43% respectively. Commenting on this incident one of the respondents was quoted saying:

In our school, the students' parents' involvement has not improved any academic achievement of our students or completion rates. In recent years academic performance and completion rates have been going down and worsening. One of the reasons is that the number of students surpasses that of the available teachers and resources. In my view, this may continue if the government does not increase educational budget.

In one of the sampled schools located in urban areas, it was found there was a different effect on the internal efficiency of primary education delivery. It was found

that completion and academic performance rates in these schools were better than the other schools. The researcher identified that in the sampled school D the completion rates increased from 93 % in 2005 to 96% in 2010 respectively. On the same school, the findings on students' academic achievement indicated that transition rates from standard seven to secondary education increased from 61% in 2005 to 65%.

This suggests that the increase in internal efficiency in this school was due to different reasons including appropriate students-teacher ratio, the availability of teaching and learning facilities such as desks, sanitary facilities and classrooms. Commenting on this issue one of the respondents was quoted as saying:

Our school has been doing better in both academic performance and completion rates. We have adequate number of teachers in all subjects and adequate number of facilities such as classrooms and library room. It is very unfortunate that we do not have teachers' houses around the school to accommodate them...

One can deduce from the argument in the quotation above that parents' involvement has only effect on the internal efficiency when other factors are considered. For example, it was noted that in some schools parents were involved effectively in supporting school financially and materially whereby the internal efficiency was high. However, in some other schools where parents were not actively involved in school programs the internal efficiency was comparatively lower. Therefore, the effect of private involvement depended on other factors such as the available number of teachers, and teaching and learning facilities.

Also, the researcher wanted to assess the effects of the parents' involvement on the construction of school physical infrastructures such as school library room, classrooms, teachers houses and sanitary facilities to mention a few. The responses from the DEOs, head teachers and school committee members were collected and summarized. The both DEOs (100%), head teachers (75%) and the members of school committees (51.8%) agreed that the parents' involvement had effect on the construction of the school infrastructures.

The findings showed that there was no effective involvement of parents on construction of school physical infrastructures. When the respondents were asked to comment on this, some of them said that parent's involvement in decision making and management provided them with opportunity to contribute financially and materially. For example, when the central government provided the development grants for school construction programs, parents were required to provide building materials, to supplement the government efforts.

Therefore, in schools where the parents were willing and ready to support construction programs, it was found that construction programs were successfully implemented. In school D all construction programs were completed and the researcher could see the library room, sanitary facilities for both girls and boys. The head teacher was quoted as saying;

In my school, construction programs have been successfully completed since their establishment in 2002 when PEDP started. We summoned a public meeting for fund raising where we received more than fifteen million

shillings. Some parents pledged money and construction materials. This school is among fewer schools in Temeke that have library room and modern sanitary facilities.....

On the contrary, the researcher found a different scenario with respect to construction of school physical infrastructures in some school. In schools A, B and C construction programs received very little support both financially and materially from the parents. For example in schools B and C, the researcher could not find library rooms nor modern sanitary facilities and classrooms.

In these schools, rehabilitation programs of the classrooms and sanitary facilities were poorly managed due to, among other factors, lack of financial support. The findings showed that there was little financial support from the parents. Therefore, as for now, it was not that easy to predict the future effectiveness of the parents involvement which was usually dependant on the existing desire for change of the behaviors of the educational administrators.

When the researcher asked the respondents to comment on what should be done to strengthen the parents involvement in the school construction programs, they said that the local people need to be made aware of the importance of the decentralization policy and that the peoples support was deeply in needed as one commented:

It is my hope that local people will support the decentralization policy only if they are already educated before it was introduced and executed. We need active participation of the parents and their autonomy in decision-making.

The comment from the quotation above suggests that all the governmental officials were optimistic that decentralized policy was effective. There is a reason that in the decentralized policy, parents must be well understood and accepted to implement. It was not clear whether the policy was being practiced or was still in theoretical perspective.

There were respondents who said that decentralization policy was not effective in promoting educational service delivery. They arguably said that the policy was not sustainable because the politicians were not seriously committed to transfer authorities to local agencies as one of the respondent remarked:

I do not see any future of this policy given the fact that the authorities in the central government are not willing to decentralized decision making power to district or school level. They used to say what they do not mean and which they never implement. For example, one cannot imagine why USD 10 planned to reach USD each pupil during PEDP could only be TSh.7000/=. If this continues there is no doubt that the decentralization policy will be rejected and therefore parents' involvement will not be sustainable.

The quotation above implies that there are no true and willing efforts by the central authorities to devolve responsibilities to lower levels. The lack of true desire to empower parents at school level does not give them full mandate to plan and make decision for their schools. This would not only despair the parents but would also grab off their autonomy for planning and decision making. This is why the respondents recommended that if the government and school administration continue

to ignore the autonomy of the local parents in managing their schools, the future of the policy would not be sustainable.

These observations support what Naidoo & Kong (2003) commented on the fact that actual devolution of power has always been to the regions, not Local Government, and therefore the effectiveness of the local entities is still somewhat constrained. They say that, there has to be consensus about the ends and means to education that provide a smooth climate which facilitates decentralization without much resistance from the centre. Trust in integrity is also an important component of considerations from the elite point of view. On the other hand however, the negligence and reluctance to decentralize certain key roles by the centre may be due to the perception of elites at the centre that the local actors are incompetent to perform the required decentralized duties. According to Therkildsen (2000) the frequent trainings done by the Central Government to Local Government Authorities in most of the developing countries, including Tanzania, could be based on the beliefs that local level participants are incompetent and therefore training is needed before they can be given more authority to manage education in their areas of jurisdiction.

#### **4.4 Identify Challenges Encountered by Involving Parents in PEDP**

##### **Implementation**

The third task was intended to identify the challenges faced to involving parents in the planning and management of school programs during PEDP implementation. The objective was to address three major research questions namely: What are the challenges encountered on the methods used to involve parents in school activities and projects in the implementation of PEDP.

#### 4.4.1 The Challenges Encountered on the Methods used to Involve Parents in School Activities and Projects

In this part, respondents were asked to provide their views and comments on the challenges encountered in involving parents in school activities and projects. The responses were collected from the DEO, head teachers and the school committee members and the results analyzed and presented in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: The Responses on Challenges Found in Involving Parents in School Activities and Projects**

Category of Responses	Category of Respondents		
	DEO	Head Teachers	School Committee Members
<b>Low level of community awareness</b>	1(100.0%)	5(100.0%)	21(60.0%)
<b>Expert domination in decision making bodies</b>	-	2(40.0%)	29(82.6%)
<b>Lack of trust among the stakeholders</b>	-	5(100.0%)	32(91.4%)
<b>Lack of management and financial skills to parents</b>	1(100%)	5(100.0%)	30(85.7%)
<b>Dependency syndrome on government and donor support</b>	1(100%)	5(100%)	27 (77.1%)

**Source: Field data, (2012)**

Data summarized in Table 4.3 indicates the respondents' views and comments on the challenges encountered in involving parents in school activities and projects. The respondents mentioned several challenges including low level of parents awareness and understanding, expert domination in decision making bodies, lack of trust among the stakeholders and lack of management and planning skills among parents and dependency syndrome on government and donor support.

The respondents for the low level and understanding of parents supported by Ministry of Education and Vocational training, District Education officials and head teachers 6(100.0%) and more than half of the members of school committee 21(60.0%) supported the idea that low level of awareness and understanding of parents was one of the challenges. When they were asked to describe the challenge, they said that low level of awareness among the parents was limiting their active participation in the planning and management of school activities and PEDP project implementation. They said that many parents were not aware and don't understand school activities belongs to them and therefore the success of the schools was on their hands.

The DEO said that despite of the government efforts to influence and motivate local communities particularly the parents to participate in the management of primary schools; community participation was still very low. The head teachers for example said that parents and local community in general did not respond positively when they were asked to participate in the mobilisation of funds and other building materials for school projects as one head teacher was quoted saying:

“...the community in my school are very complicated and do not want to participate in the development of their school. They usually give an excuse that they do not have time to attend meetings and they are financially not stable to support school construction projects...”

The argument in the quotation above shows that parents' participation in school committee and in the school projects was discouraging. It was learnt that some



parents were still thinking that management of school was the responsibility of the government or teachers. One head teacher was quoted saying that the main reason for lack of active participation among the parents was not just the financial difficulties but lack of awareness among the parents that schools were their own properties.

In schools A and B for example, the researcher observed that there was inadequate response on parents' financial contribution to support school construction projects. The school committees passed the resolutions that each parent had to contribute Tsh. 5,000 but only 32% of the parents (households) paid it all. According to the head teachers most parents were not committed to play their roles when it comes to the implementation. As a result, school construction programs relied only on the development grants from the central government which the head teachers said it was not enough for their schools.

The second challenge was mentioned to be the expert domination in decision-making process. This challenge was supported by more than three quarters of the members of school committees 29(82.6%) and 2(40.0%) of the head teachers. The DEO did not mention it as a challenge during the interviews. When they were asked to describe the challenge, the parents blamed different mechanisms used to involve parents in the school activities including the decision making in the school committee meetings. They said that although the parents were represented in the school committee members, true democratic representation was lacking and that there was lack of transparency in the planning and management of school activities as one of the parents commented:

We, as members of the school committee are representing our fellow parents in the streets, but some of us are not safe guarding the interests of our fellow parents. The school leadership is dominating the whole decision making process and therefore influencing it. Some parents in the committee are supporting the school leadership even in matters that are misleading our school. In my view, this expert domination in the school committee can distort the meaning of parental involved in school activities.

The argument in the quotation above suggests that some parents are playing wrong role in representing their fellow parents in the school committees by betraying their voters. It was also found that school leadership was taking this weakness for granted by distorting and misleading the whole meaning of parents' involvement in the decision making process. There were cases where transparency was lacking in the way schools managed their financial resources more than what is discussed in the school committee meetings.

There was a common cry among the school committee members that head teachers had the sole power to influence decision-making in the school committees meetings. This had an implication that the school committees were used as tools for passing and approving decisions that the government and teachers want to be implemented. Some members of school committees complained that although the government instructed the head teachers to announce to the public on how much the government contributed to the school, many head teachers ignored it and continued to hide the information as they made it confidential. One of the members of the school committee commented:

.... One day the head teacher sent me a document to sign in order to approve some financial transactions. Since the documents had misleading information I refused to sign and demanded more and clear explanation on the expenditure which as a Chairman I was supposed to know it even before.

According to the comment in the quotation above, some school leadership are doing great mistakes by forcing members of the school committees to approve documents with wrong information. This suggests that if members are not careful, they can approve expenditures that are not authentic. This also implies that some head teachers did not involve members in the decision of school matters including the purchasing of the books and other school facilities. They may be supplying wrong information for their own personal gain.

The third challenge was lack of trust among the stakeholders in the whole process of involving parents in school activities including decision making was painted out. This challenge was supported by more than three quarters of the members of school committees 32(91.4%) and all 5(100.0%) of the head teachers. The DEO did not mention it as a challenge during the interviews. When they were asked to describe the challenge, the respondents said that lack of trust among the stakeholders was the big roadblock to the methods used to involve the parents in planning and management of school programs. As a result, the head teachers said that it was difficult to create the sense of togetherness among the stakeholders. When the respondents were asked to describe how lack of trust among the stakeholders affected the involvement of parents in planning, the school committee members

said that it had reached a point where the school committee members did not trust one another. There were claims that some school committee members supported all the motions initiated by the head teachers on their own personal interests as one of the members said:

There is evidence that some members in the school committee are supporters of the school leadership even in corruptive matters. There was a moment when the school expenditure was questioned and criticised, but some members supported it. In my view some members are after their own interests not for the public interest...

One can deduce from the quotation that the parents' support of the corruption behaviours was neglecting the power of the people to be represented in decision-making bodies. These findings showed that there was mistrust among the teachers, school leadership and the parents to an extent of affecting the process of reaching consensus in the planning and management activities at school level. This, in addition, affected the solidarity among the stakeholders in financing, planning and public control of the school programs.

In addition, the members of school committees said that lack of trust among the stakeholders affected negatively the parents' sense of ownership of their school. It was observed that when parents lost their trust on the school leadership or other members of the school committee, they also lose the sense of school ownership. Some respondents said that they found themselves not part and parcel of the school committees as decision-making bodies because their voice was not heard. For

example, in some cases the parents refused to sign the minutes of school committee meeting because they could not accept its content, something to be which created misunderstanding among the members.

According to these informants, lack of trust among the stakeholders affect the sense of ownership of schools, this in turn may affect the security situation of the schools and their properties. The parents learned that if something is destroyed or taken away, it will be their responsibility to repair or pay for it. On the other hand, active participation of the parents raises their voice over schools' affairs especially on matters related to schools planning and management. The findings support what Mosha and Dachi (2004) argued that democratic and popular participation through decentralization of education in Tanzania was not incidental. They were meant to empower stakeholders in educational development issues through their school committees to promote broad-based collaboration in the mobilization of resources. This can mean that if the parents are effectively involved, they can contribute to the school development than receiving orders from the school leadership. This is why the United Republic of Tanzania (2004) noted that school committees in Tanzania had begun taking local ownership seriously and the 'demand culture' was growing as a result of decentralizing primary education.

The fourth challenge was lack of management and financial skills to parents in the school committees was supported by Ministry of education and vocational training officials, District Education officials and head teachers 6(100.0%) and more than three quarters of the members of school committees 30(85.7%). When they were

asked to describe the challenge, the respondents said that lack of the management and financial skills was a big a problem especially to the members of school committees. The respondents said that most parents in the school committees do not have skills and knowledge to effectively participate in planning and management of especially financial issues. Therefore, the passive nature of parents' participation may be explained by the lack of the skills to argue and participate in decision-making in school committees. With the exception of one school, the rest of three schools had a mixture of school committee members some of whom have relatively low education and medium educational level. Most of the parents' representatives in the school committees were completely illiterate on financial management and decision making procedures.

In paraphrasing this circumstance some members of school committees explained that they lacked relevant knowledge and experience on how to manage the schools. Members of the school committee's incapability to manage led the majority of them to leave most of the powers to the Head Teachers. The major reason given for the school committee to surrender their responsibility was due to the committee's incompetence due to a low level of education and a lack of experience in running schools. In a focus group discussion, one of the members of the school committee commented:

..... The school committee has big powers but we have to trust teachers and especially the Head Teachers because they know everything about the schools. They know laws and bylaws that govern the schools. They know what our children learn, and they know to feed (give education) our children.

They know leaders at regional and district levels. Teachers have a command of a language on how to talk to ‘big people’. After all, teachers are educated compared to me. So, it’s a good idea that we members of the school committee listen to them and give them support they need.....

The quotation from the respondent implies that the Members of the School Committees in primary schools lack relevant knowledge and experience to efficiently manage the primary schools. Lack of knowledge and experience had made the members of the school committee inferior and led them to informally surrender their decision-making powers to the head teachers. This can imply that the selected members of the school committee with relevant competences and experiences were confident and could efficiently utilize their decision-making powers better than those members of the school committee who lacked the required competences.

The findings imply that for effective decentralization, there should be competent people at the parents level with relevant skills to manage the decentralized functions. This is contrary to what is happening in Tanzania where more members of school committees especially in schools located in rural areas are without skills and knowledge to manage decision making process. They support Naidoo & Kong (2003) argument that the key components to be considered include: relevant skills and knowledge on decision-making, monitoring and evaluation, planning and implementation. These skills are crucial to almost all key actors at all levels. Management capabilities become vital particularly at the school level where there are actors who translate decentralization policies into concrete actions.

The fifth challenge was too much dependency on government and donors' financial support. As a challenge was supported by Ministry of education and vocational training official, District Education officials and head teachers 6(100.0%) and more than three quarters of the members of school committees 27(77.1%). When they were asked to describe the challenge, the respondents said that too much dependency on government and international donors was negatively affecting the methods used to involve the parents in planning and management of school programs. The head teachers said that although the parents were involved in school activities and projects very little financial and materials contribution came from the parents.

The methods and mechanisms used to decentralize educational management do not specify the criteria or percentages of parents' contribution to any school programs. In the views of the head teachers, the lack of awareness and readiness on the part of the parents to support school development has created more dependency condition. It was found that the funds provided to school as Capital Development Grants (CDG) are not adequate for school development; therefore, parents' contributions were necessary to supplement the government efforts. For example, in schools A and B through parents and community contributions they managed to build two classrooms and sanitary facilities for the pupils. In another school the story was different because there were two buildings unfinished due to the fact that parents were not ready to contribute. In the latter case, some very negative explanation was given as one of the parents lamented:

In the beginning when there was cooperation between the school and the parents, parental support was good. Nowadays, we have little trust on



school leadership, thus little to support school programs. We fear that our support and that of the government are mistreated by the school leadership and their associates...

The findings are supported by Mushi (2006) argument that in the absence of donors to support primary education, Tanzania can face a lot of problems. A large part of primary education budget in Tanzania is depended from donors: For example the Primary Education Development Program (PEDP) is supported and funded by the World Bank, and other developed countries like France and Belgium (Mushi, 2006).

#### **4.4.2 The Stakeholders' Views on the Effectiveness of the Methods used to**

##### **Involve Parents in School Activities and Projects as Additional Explanations**

The study was also intended to collect views and comments from the stakeholders on the effectiveness of the methods used to involve parents in school activities and projects. When they were asked whether the methods used to involve parents in school activities and projects were effective or not, the responses were mixed up. The responses were geared to respond to the question “What is the effectiveness of the methods used to involve parents in school activities and projects in the implementation of PEDP?”

The findings indicated that all the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and District Education officials 6(100.0%) and less than half 16(45.7%) of the school committee members said that the methods were effective. The rest of the respondents 19(54.3%) commented that the methods were not effective in involving the parents

in school activities and projects. The responses involved mixed feelings and views from the respondents therefore lack of common understanding and consensus among the respondents. The respondents said that there were more weaknesses on the methods to involve parents in activities related to school planning ,decision making and management of financial resources due to lack of financial skills and knowledge among those who represent parents in the school committees. As a result, they said that the head teachers' monopolized all the decision making procedures as one of the respondents was quoted as saying:

It is very unfortunate that, all the financial transactions in the school committees are managed by teachers because they have knowledge and skills in doing it. The funds which were allocated during PEDP for capacity building were not adequately used to develop us. What we can do here is to listen to what head teacher has planned for us to endorse.

In addition, school committee members were not satisfied with the way parents were being involved in planning and management of school matters. It is without doubt that in some way parents were being involved in the planning and management of school matters without adequate authority and knowledge. It was found that when the central government disbursed funds for PEDP projects, school committee through its small committees were responsible for planning and coordination of the construction projects of school infrastructures.

However parents had limited knowledge and authority to manage it. This may suggest that the involvement of parents in decision making bodies was only for the

purpose of endorsing what the central government and teachers want to implement; therefore the parents were made to be rubber stamp instead of their own focus. For this reason, the respondents said that there was no adequate evidence to prove that the methods used to involve parents in decisions making through the school committees was effective. The argument implies that in the implementation of PEDP, the school committees are used to endorse the financial budgets.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the parental involvement in management of school academic activities such as mobilization of resources and planning and budgeting of school programs during PEDP implementation in primary schools Tanzania. It examines the methods used; the challenges that emerged in the selected methods. The findings were organized and presented according to the main themes embraced in research objectives and questions.

#### **5.2 Summary of the Study**

Chapter one has provided an introduction on the background to the problem under which primary education development program (PEDP) was established to improve efficiency in the delivery of educational services in which parental involvement in the management of school development was presented by school committees. The chapter also states the objectives including identifying and assessing the school activities in which parents participate in implementation of PEDP; to examine the methods employed to involve parents in school programs during implementation of PEDP; and to identify and assess the challenges encountered during implementation of PEDP.

The study was guided by three research tasks namely the identifying and assessing the school activities in which parents participate in implementation of PEDP; examining the methods employed to involve parents in school programs during

implementation of PEDP; and identifying and assessing the challenges encountered during implementation of PEDP. The significance of the study, delimitation of the study and limitations of the study were also covered in chapter one.

Chapter two covered varieties of literature review related to the involvement of parents and school committees in management of school activities during PEDP implementation. The model is based on predictor variables, mediating variables and outcome variables and some definitions related to concepts of PEDP implementation in Tanzania were reviewed.

Chapter three covers all methodological issues used to systematically address the research problem. This chapter introduces case study research design that was used basing on school as units (cases) of study. Also covered in the chapter are methods of data collection such as interviews and focused group discussions methods; details on the target population, sample and sampling methods, data analysis, ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

A target population for this study involved all school committee members, head teachers, District Education and Ministry of educational and Vocational Training officials covering some 48 respondents and key informants. Both stratified random and purposive sampling were used to sample the respondents. The collected data were edited, coded, decoded and finally qualitatively analyzed using content and discourse data analysis. The analyzed data were classified into categories and descriptively represented using tables.

Research ethical considerations were also observed basing on confidentiality and anonymity, privacy, right to withdrawal from the investigation, avoiding plagiarism and adherence to informed consent, and honesty in reporting of data, results, methods and procedures, and publication status, refraining from fabricating, falsifying, or misrepresenting data.

Chapter four presents the findings obtained through interviews, focus group discussions and documentary reviews. The research findings are presented, analyzed and discussed based on the research tasks namely identifying and assessing the school activities in which parents participate in implementation of PEDP; examining the methods employed to involve parents in school programs during implementation of PEDP; and identifying and assessing the challenges encountered during implementation of PEDP.

Findings from task one identified and discussed school activities namely in the construction of school physical infrastructures; in the planning and management of school projects through the school committees; in the mobilisation and monitoring of the school resources such as finances, building materials etc; in the procurement of school materials such as textbooks, and building materials; and in the pupils enrolment campaigning activities.

On the necessity to involve parents in school activities and projects in the implementation of PEDP, the findings showed that parents were the major stakeholders in delivery of primary education; the government could not afford all

the costs of education due to scarcity of resources; and planning and management of school projects could only be effective and sustainable when parents are involved.

On the relationship between the school activities that parents were involved and the objectives of PEDP, the study revealed that there was relationship between the school activities that involved parents and the objectives of PEDP. The activities had relationships based on the following objectives, namely, the enrolment expansion; on quality improvement including the quality of teachers and quality of teaching and learning resources (supply of adequate textbooks, teaching and learning materials); on ensuring the capacity building through in-service and pre-service training for teachers and school management training for school leadership and school committee members at school level; and on the institutional arrangement. For example, the role of the school committees under decentralized system was to mobilize voluntary community contributions to school projects in the forms of labour, finance or other community contribution and support.

Task two identified and discussed the methods used to involve parents in school activities and projects in the implementation of PEDP namely through resource mobilization and contribution; through involvement in decision making bodies; and through involvement in public campaigns and fund raising functions.

On the ways to improve the methods of involving parents' in school activities and projects in the implementation of PEDP, the study revealed that the change of the attitudes among the government officials; to provide more autonomy to school committee to fire or sue unaccountable teachers and school leaders; and put up the

strategic criteria for appropriate qualifications of the members of the school committees; increasing the budgetary allocation for education to allow capacity building programs for strengthening school committee members and teachers, among other things.

On the effectiveness of involving parent in school activities and projects in the implementation of PEDP, the study revealed improvement in the internal efficiency of education service delivery; that parents' involvement in school planning and management has effect on the internal efficiency in education service delivery. In one of the sampled school which was located in urban areas, it was found that there was different effect on the internal efficiency of primary education delivery. It was found that completion and academic performance rates in this school was better than the other schools due to the effect of the parents' involvement on the construction of school physical infrastructures.

Task three which assessed the problems in the methods used to involve parents in the planning and management of school programs during PEDP implementation revealed that there was low level of community awareness; expert domination in decision making bodies; lack of trust among the stakeholders; lack of management and financial skills to parents; and dependency syndrome on government and donor support. About stakeholders' views on the effectiveness of the methods used to involve parents in school activities and projects in the implementation of PEDP, the study found some respondents said that the methods were effective. The other respondents commented that the methods were not effective.



### **5.3 Conclusion of the Study**

In view of the study findings on the parents involvement in management of school activities the following issues emerged.

#### **Based on Task One**

- (i) Decentralization of educational management managed to involve parents in several school activities and projects in the implementation of PEDP. The participation helped PEDP to realise some of its objectives.
- (ii) Parents are the major stakeholders necessarily to involve in school activities and projects if we need to implement PEDP projects successfully. The parents were the major stakeholders in delivery of primary education; the government could not afford all the costs of education due to scarcity of resources; and planning and management of school projects could only be effective and sustainable when parents are involved.
- (iii) There was clear relationship between the school activities that parents were involved and the objectives of PEDP, namely the enrolment expansion; quality improvement; the capacity building; and the institutional arrangement.

#### **Based on Task Two**

- (i) Several methods were used to involve parents in school activities and projects in the implementation of PEDP namely through resource mobilization and contribution; through involvement in decision making bodies; and through involvement in public campaigns and fund raising functions.
- (ii) In order to improve the methods of involving parents' in school activities and

projects in the implementation of PEDP, the government officials should change their attitudes towards undermining the authority of school committees; and by providing more autonomy to school committees; set up criteria for appropriate qualifications of the members of the school committees; increasing the budgetary allocation for education to allow capacity building programs for strengthening school committee members and teachers, among other things.

- (iii) Involvement of parents in school activities and projects in the implementation of PEDP had effects on the improvement of the internal efficiency of education system; increased completion and academic performance rates in the schools; and supported the construction of school physical infrastructures.

#### **Based on Task Three**

- (i) There were some challenges in the methods used to involve parents in the planning and management of school programs during PEDP implementation. These challenges negatively affected the active participation of parents in school activities and projects.
- (ii) Some methods used to involve parents in school activities and projects in the implementation of PEDP were effective while others were found ineffective.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

In the light of the study findings and conclusions, the present study makes the following recommendations for administrative action and for further research.

#### **5.4.1 Recommendations for Action**

First, it was recommended for the government to involve the parents not only in the financial contribution but also in active involvement in decision making and control of the financial management. The members should be trained and retrained for more relevant management and financial skills to promote trust among the stakeholders.

Secondly, it is important to consider other factors such as promoting parents involvement in planning and management of school activities on the internal efficiency of education service delivery and students academic performance. There is a need to actively involve the parents by empowering them and recognizing their contribution.

Thirdly, it was recommended that the school committee should be provided with autonomy to hold school personnel responsible. Therefore, the members need to have appropriate qualifications for their appointment or selection of their membership in the committees.

#### **5.4.2 Recommendations for Further Studies**

Taking into account the de-limitations of this study, further research studies are recommended. Since this study limited itself to the study of parents' involvement in the planning and management of the school activities in public schools, it is recommended to conduct a study to examine the same situation in public secondary schools which have been recently decentralized to local authorities.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix I: The Interviews Schedule for Head Teachers**

1. What PEDP activities do parents take part at school level?
2. How are the activities related with PEDP goals and objectives?
3. What are the methods used to involve parents' in school activities during PEDP?
4. How effective are the methods employed to involve parents?
5. What challenges do parents encounter in their participation in school activities?
6. Which school activities have been successfully implemented as a result of parents' participation in school activities?
7. How do you relate parents' involvement in school activities and the school academic achievement?
8. What is your comment on improving the methods to involve parents' in schools activities?



**Appendix II: The Interviews for District Educational Officer (DEOs)**

1. What PEDP activities do parents take part at school level?
2. How do you relate the activities related with PEDP goals and objectives?
3. What are the methods used to involve parents' in school activities?
4. How do you comment on the effectiveness of the methods employed to involve parents in activities?
5. Which school activities have been successfully implemented as a result of parents involvement in school activities?
6. How do you relate parents' involvement in school activities and the school academic achievement?
7. What is your comment on improving the methods to involve parents' in schools activities?

**Appendix III: Interviews for the Ministry of Education Officials**

1. What PEDP activities should the parents take part at school level?
2. How do you relate the activities related with PEDP goals and objectives?
3. What are the methods used to involve parents' in school activities?
4. How do you comment on the effectiveness of the methods employed to involve parents in activities?
5. Which school activities have been successfully implemented as a result of parents' involvement in school activities?
6. How do you relate parents' participation in school activities and the schools' academic achievement?
7. What is your comment on improving the methods to allow parents participation in schools activities?

**Appendix IV: Focused Group Discussion for school Committee Members**

1. What PEDP activities do the parents take part in school level?
2. How does school involve parents in implementing activities in your school?
3. What methods does the school use to involve parents in school activities?
4. How do you comment on the effectiveness of the methods employed to involve in school activities?
5. What challenges do you think parents encounter in participating in school activities?
6. Which school activities have been successfully implemented as a result of parents' involvement in school activities?
7. How do you relate parents' participation in school activities and the school academic achievement?
8. What is your comment on improving the methods for parental participation in schools activities?